

Translation Services Synopsis/Pre-Solicitation Number PROC0600172 Questions and Answers, 8/2/2006

1. I would like to know if there is a citizenship requirement for this requirement.

Response:

There is no citizenship requirement, however non-citizens working under government contracts must have official legal status in the United States. Any additional suitability requirements will be included in the RFP.

2. Are we supposed to have the 10 pages on the 25th or just questions for the formal RFP?

Response:

Questions should be forwarded via e-mail to Ann F. Miller @ ann.miller1@uspto.gov, and must be received by 2:00 p.m. (EDST) on Tuesday, July 25, 2006. Questions received after this date will not be entertained. Responses to questions will be posted on the USPTO website.

Responses to this synopsis/pre-solicitation should be forwarded via e-mail to Ann F. Miller @ ann.miller1@uspto.gov, and must be received no later than 2:00 p.m. (EDST) on Wednesday, August 9, 2006.

3. One of the key elements for World Server to be used and effective is if the source docs are in electronic format (preferably word not PDF). Can you verify what format the docs are in?

Response:

The synopsis/pre-solicitation documents are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, with the exception of Attachment 2. The format of the translation documents is provided in the response to Question No. 12 of this document.

4. When is the pre-solicitation information due for the German and Japanese USPTO project?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 2 of this document. Please note that the pricing example includes German and Japanese, but the requirement includes all of the languages that are included in Attachment 2.

5. I have read the questions that have been submitted so far, but am still not clear on the attachment 1, Alternate Methods for Word Computation. It is my understanding that we are to submit 3 different schedules, one for each computation method.

Stroke Counting Method: In order to do this calculation, I am assuming that an English document must be used. In trying to determine the Spanish word count, for example, the Spanish word count ended up being half of the English word count. That did not seem to make sense.

Target Word Counting Method: The word count feature, as I have used it, is used to count the words of the "existing" document, which is the source document. Please clarify why this is used for the target word counting method.

I am not sure why 3 different schedules must be attached. We are to indicate the price based on the translation of 1,000 words. It should not change according to calculation

method, but rather only depending on if the price is supplied based on target language or source language.

Could you please clarify the above?

Response:

The stroke counting method is where the original foreign language word count is used. The target counting method is where the number of English words in the completed translation is used. The first method is basing the price on the number of foreign language words using the stroke method. The second is basing the price on the number of foreign language words using word counting software and the third is based on the number of words in the English translation.

6. As a follow up to Q&A 14, we had actually meant to say that we have comments and concerns about some of the items in Attachment 1, not Attachment 2. Can we still provide this feedback in response to the Notice, in response to the same question asking us to comment about Attachment 2?

Response:

Identify in 2 typewritten pages or less any suggested changes to the statement of work, clauses, contract duration that may improve the quality and pricing under the proposed contract.

7. Question related to the price estimation and word computation to pre-proposal submission for German and Japanese language translation: It was mentioned that we need to put our price estimation for foreign languages based on 1000 English words (target) using the three word counting methods (Stroke, Target and Source). By using the Stroke method, we will get the approximate number of source words/characters of foreign languages. So, we don't see any difference between the source words/characters and the number of words/characters we get by Stroke counting method. So, what is the need to put the same thing for both source and target words as this will not change the rate?

Example:

SCHEDULE OF SUPPLIES SERVICES AND PRICES				
NOTE:THIS SCHEDULE IS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTO ENGLISH				
TRANSLATION OF 1000 WORDS BY DELIVERY TYPE				
<i>Stroke Counting Method</i>				
LANGUAGE	CLIN	RUSH	STANDARD	ECONOMY
German	0011	1039 words		
Japanese	0016	3897 characters		

Example:

SCHEDULE OF SUPPLIES SERVICES AND PRICES				
NOTE:THIS SCHEDULE IS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTO ENGLISH				
TRANSLATION OF 1000 WORDS BY DELIVERY TYPE				
<i>Source Word Counting Method</i>				
LANGUAGE	CLIN	RUSH	STANDARD	ECONOMY

German	0011	1039??		
Japanese	0016	3897??		

Example:

SCHEDULE OF SUPPLIES SERVICES AND PRICES				
NOTE: THIS SCHEDULE IS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTO ENGLISH				
TRANSLATION OF 1000 WORDS BY DELIVERY TYPE				
<i>Target Word Counting Method</i>				
LANGUAGE	CLIN	RUSH	STANDARD	ECONOMY
German	0011	1000 words	1000	1000
Japanese	0016	1000 words	1000	1000

Response:

Please see response to #5, but price is to be provided for the translation of 1000 foreign language words in methods 1 & 2, but for 1000 English words in method 3.

8. Question related to the price estimation and word computation to pre-proposal submission for German and Japanese language translation: Provide the price for translation of 1000 words by CLIN for German and Japanese per Attachment 1. Pricing should be provided for each of the three (3) word count methods for the base year:

- What is meaning by CLIN, COTR and USPTO?

Response:

CLIN: Contract Line Item

COTR: Contracting Officer's Technical Representative

USPTO: United States Patent and Trademark Office

- What is the need to present total word counts by stroke and source word methods as we will reach source word estimation using stroke counting method?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 5 of this document. Method 1 is using stroke method, Method 2 is using automated word counting method, and Method 3 is using English translated word count method.

- Is the above table format a correct way to put our price estimation?

Response:

The chart should include the cost/word for each level of service (Rush, Standard, and Economy), for each language.

9. Question related to the price estimation and word computation to pre-proposal submission for German and Japanese language translation: Do we need to present price schedule for other languages (other than Japanese and German)?

Response:

The synopsis/pre-solicitation specifies the following: Provide the price for translation of 1000 words by CLIN for German and Japanese per Attachment 1.

10. Is "Economy" or "Standard" meaning the normal delivery time?

Response:

A response was provided in Question 1 of the Questions and Answers document, 7/19/2006.

11. What is the source and basis for 1) the methodology used in the FL Space Count Factor Chart and 2) the space count factor of each language used in the chart, which has been used for the current word counting method by the USPTO for a number of years?

Response:

This was based on a system from JPRS.

12. In what format will the documents for translation be received? PDF, doc, .ppt, etc.?

Response:

Documents may be in PDF, Word, TIF, JPEG, etc. or other commonly used formats. Vendor should have the ability to handle various file formats. Completed translations should include not only the translated text, but also translation of any tables, charts, drawing text or captions, i.e. translation of all information presented in the original document.

13. Does the USPTO use translation memory software and if so, will translation memories be supplied to the Contractors awarded the bid?

Response:

USPTO does not currently use translation memory software.

14. Please further explain the three separate word counting methods. Are we to assume that the basis for the pricing is a German or Japanese into English translation, whereas "source pricing" would be based on each German or Japanese word/keystroke and "target pricing" would be based on each English word/keystroke (i.e. adjusting for shrinkage/expansion of languages with the overall cost of the translation remaining the same) for that same translation? Or are we to base pricing on a per German or Japanese word/keystroke when they are the target languages vs. when they are source languages? Our company typically quotes based on the English word and has never quoted by keystroke.

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 5 of this document.

15. Do all items in Attachment 1, Alternate methods for word computation, refer only to ways to count words in estimate/bid, or do they also refer to counts in the actual project?

Response:

They refer to counts in the actual projects.

16. Re source word count method: ... each foreign word and group of three or more number or symbols that are not reproduced for insertion into the translated copy are counted as a foreign word. Does this mean we will be paid for these numbers/symbols even though they do not appear in the translation?

Response:

Everything from the original document, should be duplicated in the translation so that the translation is a complete document which can be referred to on it's own. This eliminates the need to refer to the original document.

17. Re source word count method: ... each English word in the foreign text crossed out by the COTR will not be translated or counted in the foreign word computation. So, does this mean that the translator does not type/input any English words that have been crossed out; i.e., they are simply omitted from the translation? Or do they have to be typed/input and crossed through in the translation, but the translator is not paid for including them?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 16 of this document. The English words should be duplicated in the translation, but as these do not need to be translated they should not be counted in the foreign word computation.

18. Re target word count method: Each English word in the foreign text crossed out by the COTR will not be translated or counted in the total foreign word count. So, does this mean that the translator does not type/input any English words that have been crossed out; i.e., they are simply omitted from the translation? Or do they have to be typed/input and crossed through in the translation, but the translator is not paid for including them?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 16 of this document. The English should be duplicated in the translation, however since they do not need to be translated they should not be counted in the foreign word computation.

19. You indicate that we should submit sources and qualifications for our translators. Do you mean you want profiles of our translators, or do you want to know what our requirements are before we register a translator?

Response:

Please provide a description of the education and experience of translators that would be working on this contract and the source of translators i.e. percentage on company staff, percentage of subcontractors, etc. Information on requirements used before they are registered would be helpful.

20. We have not yet worked on a project similar to yours in content, i.e. patent literature, but we have done works similar in size and scope and we are registered in the CCR system. Will we still be considered as an equally competitive vendor?

Response:

Responses will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria that was provided in the synopsis/pre-solicitation notice.

21. Besides being sent electronically or via fax, do you accept translations via an FTP site where you will have access to the documents as soon as we upload them into the site?

Response:

Yes, an FTP site and e-mail are acceptable and will be finalized based on mutually agreed upon procedures.

22. Are the vendors currently holding these contracts able to compete again or will it definitely be awarded to a new company?

Response:

The three incumbents may provide responses to the synopsis/pre-solicitation.

23. Do you require resumes from each translator working on your projects or is the contractor's judgment enough?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 19 of this document. At this time, we are not asking for the resumes, but reserve the right to request this information later in this process.

24. We are primarily a Korean-English translation company with a few Japanese translators also. Is it possible to bid only on Korean-to-English patent translation and a limited number of Japanese translations?

Response:

A response was provided in Question 5 of the Questions and Answers document, 7/19/2006.

25. Is this solicitation due on August 17th? Can we email solicitations, fax or do we need to mail all materials at the same time?

Response:

A response is provided in Question No. 2 of this document.

26. What is CLIN in section 4 "Pricing" for your requirements?

Response:

A response is provided in Question No. 8 of this document.

27. For the Pricing Schedule Option 2, what rates do we add in for rush, standard and economy for each language? IS it the cost that we charge to have it done in 1 day (rush) 2-3 days (standard) and 4-5 business days (economy) or is it the cost for the shipping charges, printing charges, salaries and supplies or a combination of the 2 scenarios?

Response:

Payment will be based on the number of words and must include all applicable contractor costs. No additional charges for other costs outlined above will be paid.

28. Is the pricing methods that we turn in our actual bid for the contract? Does the rate per language need to include all expenses involved in translation and interpretation?

Response:

It is anticipated that the contract type will be a firm fixed price requirements contract. Pricing information is also provided in the response to Question No. 12 of this document.

29. Is there any particular letterhead or form that we need to use to go along with the requirements? Is there any other documentation that is not listed in the request that needs to accompany the contract?

Response:

A response was provided in Question 6 of the Questions and Answers document, 7/19/2006. The information should be provided on the supplier's letterhead and signed by an official of your company who can legally bind your company.

30. How do we count non-text symbol material such as math equations, chemical formulas, and genomic code?

Response:

As this information is not translated but simply needs to be included from the original document, it should not be counted as words that are translated. Any text associated with this information, that needs to be translated should be counted per the same method as the rest of the document.

31. How do we count hyphenated names that are extensive, such as chemical names that may be as long as entire line?

Response:

If the names are a full line, they would be counted as such.

32. Will you always supply the patent diagrams? This is important to the translator.

Response:

We will provide the e-copy of the full document. The completed translation should have all the drawings, tables, text, figures of the original in the same format as the original.

33. What format will the source documents come in? If there are several, please provide detail. Will we have a choice?

Response:

This information is provided in the response to Question No. 12 of this document.

34. How should we handle any illegible material?

Response:

When this occurs, the contractor must notify the USPTO right away and the best available copy will be provided.

35. Is there a specification for the translation format?

Response:

The Translation should be presented in the same format as the original document.

36. Please give us any information available about the week-to-week variation in workload regarding word count volume and number of languages involved. Are there any seasonal variations?

Response:

The work is received from patent examiners and the Translations Branch does not control the work flow. The USPTO works on a quarterly system and it is typically busier a few weeks prior to the end of each fiscal year quarter and particularly busy a few weeks before the end of the fiscal year.

37. Will the total volume be divided equally and randomly among the contractors, or will the division be subject to such factors as individual language price and ongoing performance? Right now we are assuming that the individual language prices are not separate bids, and that it is not fair for the USPTO to select the lowest language prices from each contractor. Do you agree, and will you not do this?

Response:

The work will be divided equally among the selected contractors.

38. What fraction of the work is likely not to be patents - e.g., letters, articles, etc. (approximate percentage)? The non-patent work requires different translators.

Response:

Less than 10% of the requirement is estimated to include non-patent work.

39. Will the three incumbents automatically be included in the competitive range?

Response:

No.

40. When will offerors be notified regarding inclusion in the competitive range?

Response:

The competitive range determination depends on the number of responses received, however it is anticipated that offerors will be notified by the end of September.

41. What is the anticipated timeframe between notification of inclusion in the competitive range, receipt of final RFP, and deadline for final RFP?

Response:

This information will be provided to the offerors that are included in the competitive range.

42. In the source word counting method:

“group of three or more numbers” is this three or more digits?

“that are not reproduced for insertion into the translated copy” if they’re not to be reproduced, why do they count?

Response:

That is correct, it should state “that are reproduced for insertion...”

43. Are all current incumbents small businesses?

Response:

Yes

44. Would the work be shared equally among the selected vendors?

Response:

A response was provided in Questions No. 37 of this document.

45. What are the current turnaround times? Are they being met?

Response:

The response to the first question was provided in the response to Question 1 of the Questions and Answers document, 7/19/2006.

The response to the second questions is provided in the response to Question No. 47 of this document.

46. Does USPTO conduct quality assessments of current translations? If so, what is the process by which that is done? What have the results been?

Response:

The USPTO's translation staff does a random check of the quality of translations received. The supplier is notified of any problems that are found.

47. Have there been complaints regarding the quality of current translations?

Response:

This question has no relevance regarding the current requirement.

48. Is USPTO able to satisfy the volume of translations needed under the current contract structure?

Response:

Yes

49. How many awards do you anticipate?

Response:

The USPTO will evaluate the initial responses and establish a competitive range limited to a predetermined number of not more than five offerors. The number of awards will be determined at a later time.

50. How will responses be evaluated? Will responses to each category have a weighted value for evaluation?

Response:

The USPTO will evaluate vendors' responses based on translator qualifications, quality control systems, past performance, and pricing criteria.

51. Does USPTO anticipate an increasing volume in languages other than Japanese and German?

Response:

Yes, we continue to see increases in other languages, but the majority are Japanese and German.

52. How can I get a sample Japanese and German patent to base my prices on? Can I get retrieve it from the USPTO website.

Response:

Samples of foreign patents are available from the websites of the respective patent offices.

53. Is there a way we can access the current contract? Contract # 50-PAPT-2-01001 and Contract # 50-PAPT-2-01002).

Response:

The information for submitting a FOIA request is available on the USPTO website:

<http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/ac/comp/proc/>

54. My question as I read through is RFP is; when you specify, "This procurement is open to qualified small businesses only..." what is the requirements of a "qualified" small business? If you could clarify this for me it would be a big help.

Response:

Business size standards per NAICS code are available at the following website:

<http://www.sba.gov/size/sizetable2002.html>